



Peter Hauer

End of Tragedy

A skeleton hanging high in a tree was found Thanksgiving afternoon and apparently ends the mystery of the Walter Smith—Peter Hauer tragedy. The identification of the bones as being those of Peter Marshall Hauer was positively confirmed Monday by the State's Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Ivan Sopher, in a call to Corporal W. R. Dyer, State Policeman, of Marlinton, who was in charge of the investigation. Comparison was made to dental and skull X-rays supplied by his family doctor. His death was ruled a suicide by hanging and the time of death was judged to be in accordance with the time of Hauer's disappearance about June 9. The heavy foliage at that time of year had prevented the sighting of the body in the intensive search in June, and, of course, the search had centered on caves.

Sammy Dean, of Hillsboro, and his eleven year old son, Larkin, were hunting in the Lobelia area Thursday (November 27) when the boy saw the skull in the tree. The head and part of the neck skeleton was with a four foot section of rope about 30 feet above the ground. The remainder of the skeletonized body had fallen to the ground. The location was about two and a half miles from Hauer's home on the old Hull place owned by Elmer Wymer, as near as we can ascertain.

Hauer was born November 11, 1945, in Lebanon, Pennsylvania. His mother, Carmelia Hauer, and a sister, Lisa, survive him. He was a former teacher and his interest in caves had brought him to the Lobelia area, where he purchased the Harper Anderson farm. He was working on a history of salt peter caves in Pocahontas, Greenbrier and Monroe Counties.

Corporal Dyer says that he is satisfied this is the end of the mystery that began with the disappearance in the Lobelia area of Walter G. Smith, 18, of Follansbee, a summer worker at Watoga State Park, on June 4. Hauer was last seen the following Monday. Smith's body, with three bullet holes in the head, was found on Wednesday, June 11, in the Lobelia Saltpeter Cave, right close to Hauer's home, after a last will and testament paper of Hauer's was found in his house telling of the murder and where Smith's body was and that his own body would eventually be found in a cave, hence the exhaustive search of caves in the area that followed.

Permission to print the paper was denied Monday as it is part of criminal evidence but it evidently will have to be recorded to effect the transfer of the 28 acre farm which Hauer wanted to go to the Nature Conservancy, a national group dedicated to preserving areas in their natural state. The typed will was signed but not witnessed.

Hauer had been indicted for Smith's murder at the October Term of Court and so the case is judged a murder-suicide and the case considered closed.

In Memory

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May God rest your soul and give you peace. And may your acts of kindness shine over the darkness of your passing.

Your Friends

Mrs. Lloyd D. Wilson

Mrs. Jessie Gray McFerrin Wilson, 77, of Mill Point, died Monday, May 15, 1978, at Denmar State Hospital after several years' illness.

She was a schoolteacher before her marriage to Lloyd Wilson, who preceded her in death in 1971. She was a member of the Marvin Chapel Methodist Church.

Mrs. Wilson was the daughter of the late Dr. Samuel A. McFerrin, Sr., and Mary Virginia Hanna McFerrin.

Surviving her are a brother, Edward McFerrin, of Frankford, and one nephew, Samuel A. McFerrin, III, of Renick.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

History of Hillsboro Community

(Pocahontas County)
By Mary Isetta Wallace

The town of Hillsboro is located in a rich and beautiful valley. It is two and one-half miles from the nearest railroad station called Seebert and named in honor of a family by that name which settled there in the wilderness in the early days. Hillsboro was named for Richard Hill, the pioneer from North Carolina, who built his home on a good farm in the neighboring Lobelia. His house was an unusually good one for that age. Simon Girty, the renegade, told that Indians were so impressed with the fine display of the home of Mr. Hill that they called him white man's king.

The house was built of hewed logs, and the space between filled with wood, mortar or mud, and then white washed. It had three porches, two tall chimneys, and eight rooms. Hills Creek was named for Mr. Hill and, because of his sterling worth, "will sing his requiem as long as its waters flow." The creek flows through a narrow channel which increases its velocity until it plunges over a precipice sixty or more feet high forming a perfect spray and creating the beautiful Falls of Hills Creek.

Bruffey's Creek named after the first settler, John Bruffey, son of Patrick Bruffey, the pioneer, a revolutionary soldier under General Wayne, unites in time of flood with Hills Creek where their waters sink under Droop Mountain to appear again in the lower end of the Little Levels. Hills Creek forms Locust Creek and empties into the Greenbrier River. Bruffeys Creek forms Hughes Creek and after sinking and partly sinking for two miles, empties into the Blue Hole. Many of the numerous progeny of Richard Hill founded their homes in the Hillsboro Community.

The majority of the people of Hillsboro Community are of Scotch-Irish descent, their chief pursuits being agriculture and stock raising. Many fine herds of cattle and sheep, from time immemorial, have been prepared for the eastern markets and at the present time under the stimulus of

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Hillsboro has always
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Oak Grove Presbyterian
Church was organized in
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The body is at the Jack K. Wallace Funeral Home in Lewisburg.

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As the traveler ascends by an easy climb and gentle undulations the winding road cut on the face of Droop Mountain he beholds a panorama of unsurpassed loveliness when the sun pours his effulgent warmth and brightness over the mountains, plains, valleys and hills as they unite in proclaiming "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice." He also beholds

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Hillsboro has always been a religious and educational center. John Jordan of pioneer fame gave a building site to the Methodist church which was destroyed by fire and they have since built four other churches in the community and now worship in a very comfortable, commodious building in the town of Hillsboro. In extracts from the journal of Rev. Francis Asbury we find that in the years 1788, 1790 and 1796 he had made three evangelistic tours through this section of the country coming up through Greenbrier County each time and being entertained and preaching at the home of McNeel in the Little Levels, going from there to the Drinnon home where he was received "gladly" and entertained "kindly" in the Edray neighborhood. His course led from there to Cloverlick down through Tygarts Valley in Randolph County enroute to Morgantown. At the McNeel home lively religious discussions were indulged in by the whole community.

Oak Grove Presbyterian Church was organized in the year of 1793. The early records of the Church were lost and no one remembers when it was built. A substantial brick structure in which this sect worshipped for many years was later built southeast of Hillsboro, where the cemetery is still kept up. In 1830 the Church was reorganized and Josiah Beard, Davis Poague, and John Jordan were elected elders. The most distinguished ministers who served this Church

over

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from 1820 to 1872 were Rev. Joseph Brown, Rev. Wm. G. Campbell, Rev. John S. Blain, Rev. Mitchel B. Dunlap, and Rev. D. S. Sydenstricker.

A new church, a frame building, was built in the town of Hillsboro, where the present church is located, in the early ministry of Dr. D. S. Sydenstricker. He was succeeded by the present pastor, Rev. J. C. Johnson. The frame church was torn down in the year of 1910, as it was deemed advisable to repair the old church with a new one. A new brick building occupies the site and bears the name of "Oak Grove Church" in memory of the pioneer church although surrounded by a maple grove. The two prevailing denominations, Methodists and Presbyterians, have been signally blessed in securing ministers of great spiritual vision and consecration, for which is expressed their gratitude and appreciation.

In the early part of the eighteenth century a very important educational work flourished in what was then the village of Hillsboro.

Under the supervision of Rev. Joseph Brown the brick Academy was built and contained one large central room with two wings. The name of Hillsboro was abandoned in deference to that of "Academy," so strong was the impress of the school's influence on the minds and the hearts of the people. In recent years the old name of Hillsboro has been restored to the town.

M. A. Dunlap of Ponca City, Oklahoma, has contributed some recollections of ante bellum days from his remarkable memory of conversations heard in the home of his uncle, Rev. M. D. Dunlap. He thinks the first teacher ever in Hillsboro community was a man by the name of Keenan who taught more than a hundred years ago. This teacher was considered a very learned man from the fact that he could write and read and had figured in the arithmetic as far as the rule of three. The next teacher was Rev. John S. Blain, a Presbyterian preacher, a teacher, and a physician. He is described as a large, lean, strong, man possessed of a kindly face and gentle heart. The descrip-

whipped 13 boys the second day of school, 21 the third day, and 5 and 6 each day for about a week. After

that no further trouble was experienced. But the school had an unsavory reputation that had to be disciplined, and he used the means within his power. The wife of Dr. Blain was a Miss MacRoberts, sister of Archibald MacRoberts, who made his home with them and told that panthers would sometimes enter their spring house and drink their milk. Mr. MacRoberts, whose father was a Randolph of Roanoke and descendant of Pocahontas, was the next teacher. He was well educated and a man of great talents that he used only under compulsion. He was a Whig, and in a campaign then being conducted between a Whig and a Democrat—in which the Whig was defeated in the argument—Mr. MacRoberts became so disgusted that he followed them to the next appointment and so completely routed the Democrat that he made it suit to steer clear of his antagonist.

The next teacher was Rev. Joseph Brown whose gentle, Christian character greatly endeared him to the people; and it is to be taken for granted that as he was instrumental in the building of the brick Academy he must have been the first teacher within its walls. Rev. M. D. Dunlap succeeded him and taught from 1835 to 1845. His school had a wide reputation among his pupils and enjoyed the patronage of the Lewises and Irwins of Kanawha County; Tyrees and others of Fayette County; the Hayneses and others of Monroe County; the Johnsons, Bears, and others of Greenbrier County; the Bensons, Lightners, and Ruckmans, of Highland County, Virginia. He taught throughout the entire year and sought the help of the more advanced pupils, notably Rev. Wm. T. Price and Rev. James Haynes. It was his opinion that about eighty pupils were as many as one man could handle.

Mr. Kelso, of Pennsylvania, and Miss Priscilla Ramsey, of Augusta County, Virginia, taught one session, and after the close of school were married and

school. Rev. Daniel A. Penick filled the position of teacher one year, boarded at Colonel Paul McNeel's and the following autumn married the latter's eldest daughter. Rev. Mr. Emerson taught two sessions, boarded at Colonel McNeels, and made a compass that ran a perfect line from the McNeel gate to the Academy. Mr. Emerson was said to be a relative of Ralph Waldo Emerson, a native of New England. Miss Mary S. Loverage, Connecticut, taught in Hillsboro at the same time but in a different building. Mr. Emerson became one of her most ardent admirers, but her choice fell on Mr. Henry Clark. Mr. Dunlap is under the impression that Mr. Emerson never married, which is erroneous one because established a school for young ladies at Shemaro, Augusta County, Virginia, in which he was assisted by his wife. Miss M. Sprinkel taught in the

of Colonel McNeel the year of the Civil War was betrothed to John Gess, the first man in this community to be killed by the Northern soldiers in their initial raid through the country.

From the foregoing interesting data it is easy to understand why so many noble and worthy lives were moulded in this fine institution of learning. The of Mr. Harmanus Stulting and family deserve special mention. They were natives of Holland, an escape from religious persecution, braved the perils of the deep on the rugged of that day and came to dwell among us where the country was in its infancy. They were valuable contributions to the social life of the community and their devoted piety accomplished much for this the land of their adoption. Mr. Cornelius Stulting, eldest son of the family, was a fine scholar for many years and recently, mourned the loss of a son who knew him. Mr. Stulting Sydenstricker

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of Colonel McNeel the first year of the Civil War and was betrothed to John Burgess, the first man from this community to be killed by the Northern soldiers in their initial raid through the country.

From the foregoing interesting data it is easy to understand why so many noble and worthy lives were moulded in this fine institution of learning. The lives of Mr. Harmanus Stulting and family deserve special mention. They were natives of Holland, and to escape religious persecution, braved the perils of the deep on the rude craft of that day and came to dwell among us when the country was in its infancy. They were valuable additions to the social life of the community and through their devoted piety accomplished much good in this the land of their adoption. Mr. Cornelius Stulting, eldest son in the family, was a fine teacher for many years and died recently, mourned by all who knew him. Mrs. Carrie Stulting Sydenstricker, a daughter in the family, gave her life as a missionary to China, being sent as a member of the Oak Grove Church.

Rev. J. S. Kennison, a minister now in Albemarle Presbytery, N. C., is another worthy representative in the Master's cause from

Neel, of Frederick County, Virginia. He was of a pugilistic temperament and, in the fear that he had slain an antagonist, fled from his native land and became a fugitive who followed the trend of the Alleghanies. After spending some time in their gloomy depths he emerged into this section of the country and was so favorably impressed with the fertile land, fine timber, and the general outlook of a goodly place in which to dwell, that he cast his tent on the gentle slope between where are now the gate at the road and the Matthew John McNeel residence.

He came here in the year 1765. After he began to occupy his tent or camp, padded, muffled, footsteps were heard circling the camp at night. He feigned sleep, keeping his gun near at hand, until he heard something stealthily creep upon the poles forming the roof. When he looked in the direction of the sound he beheld, by the light of the camp fire, the fiery eyes of a panther. He lost no time getting rid of the unwelcome visitor.

One day while out hunting for venison and fish he met Charles and Jacob Kennison, natives of his home land, who proved angels in disguise in bringing to him the glad tidings that the man he thought he had killed had recovered and was in good health. Imagination fails to convey the great relief and gratitude that filled his heart to know he was not a murderer, of which his future life gave convincing evidence. He invited the Kennisons to share his camp and aided them in selecting a home site adjoining his tract. About this time John McNeel must have built himself a cabin in the rear of the Matthew John McNeel residence, near a wonderful spring in that locality. These three men soon returned to the lower valley of Virginia. It was on this visit that he married Martha Davis who was born in Wales in 1740. Soon after their marriage they came to the Little Levels to make their home. They brought with them a Welch Bible now in the possession of Joseph S. McNeel, son of

ipped 13 boys the second
of school, 21 the third
, and 5 and 6 each day
about a week. After

at no further trouble was
experienced. But the
hool had an unsavory
putation that had to be
disciplined, and he used
e means within his pow-

The wife of Dr. Blain
as a Miss MacRoberts,
ster of Archibald Mac-
oberts, who made his
ome with them and told
at panthers would some-
mes enter their spring
ouse and drink their milk.
r. MacRoberts, whose
ther was a Randolph of
oanoke and descendant of
ocahontas, was the next
eacher. He was well
educated and a man of
reat talents that he used
nly under compulsion. He
as a Whig, and in a
ampaign then being con-
ucted between a Whig and

Democrat—in which the
Whig was defeated in the
argument—Mr. MacRob-
erts became so disgusted
that he followed them to the
next appointment and so
completely routed the Dem-
ocrat that he made it suit to
steer clear of his antagonist

The next teacher was
Rev. Joseph Brown whose
gentle, Christian character
greatly endeared him to the
people; and it is to be taken
for granted that as he was
instrumental in the build-
ing of the brick Academy he
must have been the first
teacher within its walls.
Rev. M. D. Dunlap suc-
ceeded him and taught
from 1835 to 1845. His
school had a wide reputa-
tion among his pupils and
enjoyed the patronage of
the Lewises and Irwins of
Kanawha County; Tyrees
and others of Fayette Coun-
ty; the Hayneses and others
of Monroe County; the
Johnsons, Bears, and oth-
ers of Greenbrier County;
the Bensons, Lightners,
and Ruckmans, of Highland
County, Virginia. He
taught throughout the en-
tire year and sought the
help of the more advanc-
ed pupils, notably Rev.
Wm. T. Price and Rev.
James Haynes. It was his
opinion that about eighty
pupils were as many as one
man could handle.

Mr. Kelso, of Pennsyl-
vania, and Miss Priscilla
Ramsey, of Augusta Coun-
ty, Virginia, taught one

school. Rev. Daniel A.
Penick filled the position of
teacher one year, boarded
at Colonel Paul McNeel's,
and the following autumn
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al Dyer says that he
ed this is the end of
ery that began with
pearance in the Lo-
of Walter G. Smith,
ollansbee, a summer
t Watoga State Park,
4. Hauer was last
following Monday.
body, with three bul-
s in the head, was
Wednesday, June 11,
obelia Saltpeter Cave,
se to Hauer's home,
ast will and testament
Hauer's was found in
e telling of the murder
ere Smith's body was
his own body would
lly be found in a cave,
e exhaustive search of
the area that followed.
ssion to print the pap-
enied Monday as it is
criminal evidence but
ntly will have to be re-
to effect the transfer of
cre farm which Hauer
to go to the Nature
rancy, a national group
ed to preserving areas
natural state. The typ-
was signed but not wit-

er had been indicted for
s murder at the October
of Court and so the case
ed a murder-suicide and
e considered closed.

In Memory

Peter Hauer

May God rest your
soul and give you
peace. And may
your acts of kindness
shine over the dark-
ness of your passing.

Your Friends

Mrs. Lloyd D. Wilson

Jessie Gray McFerrin
n, 77, of Mill Point, died
ay, May 15, 1978, at
ar State Hospital after
l years' illness.

was a schoolteacher be-
er marriage to Lloyd
n, who preceded her in
in 1971. She was a
er of the Marvin Chap-
thodist Church.

s. Wilson was the daugh-
the late Dr. Samuel A.
rrin, Sr., and Mary Vir-
Hanna McFerrin.

iving her are a brother,
ard McFerrin, of Frank-
and one nephew, Samuel
McFerrin, III, of Renick.
neral arrangements are
plete

History of Hillsboro Community

(Pocahontas County)

By Mary Isetta Wallace

The town of Hillsboro is
located in a rich and beauti-
ful valley. It is two and
one-half miles from the
nearest railroad station
called Seebert and named
in honor of a family by that
name which settled there in
the wilderness in the early
days. Hillsboro was named
for Richard Hill, the pio-
neer from North Carolina,
who built his home on a
good farm in the neighbor-
ing Lobelia. His house was
an unusually good one for
that age. Simon Girty, the
renegade, told that Indians
were so impressed with the
fine display of the home of
Mr. Hill that they called
him white man's king.

The house was built of
hewed logs, and the space
between filled with wood,
mortar or mud, and then
white washed. It had three
porches, two tall chimneys,
and eight rooms. Hills
Creek was named for Mr.
Hill and, because of his
sterling worth, "will sing
his requiem as long as its
waters flow." The creek
flows through a narrow
channel which increases its
velocity until it plunges
over a precipice sixty or
more feet high forming a
perfect spray and creating
the beautiful Falls of Hills
Creek.

Bruffey's Creek named
after the first settler, John
Bruffey, son of Patrick
Bruffey, the pioneer, a
revolutionary soldier under
General Wayne, unites in
time of flood with Hills
Creek where their waters
sink under Droop Mountain
to appear again in the lower
end of the Little Levels.
Hills Creek forms Locust
Creek and empties into the
Greenbrier River. Bruffeys
Creek forms Hughes Creek
and after sinking and partly
sinking for two miles, emp-
ties into the Blue Hole.
Many of the numerous
progeny of Richard Hill
founded their homes in the
Hillsboro Community.

The majority of the peo-
ple of Hillsboro Community
are of Scotch-Irish descent,
their chief pursuits being
agriculture and stock rais-
ing. Many fine herds of
cattle and sheep, from time
immemorial, have been
prepared for the eastern
markets and at the present

C. Willey, the farmers are
becoming thoroughly
aroused to the importance
of purebred stock.

As the traveler ascends
by an easy climb and gentle
undulations the winding
road cut on the face of
Droop Mountain he beholds
a panorama of unsurpassed
loveliness when the sun
pours his effulgent warmth
and brightness over the
mountains, plains, valleys
and hills as they unite in
proclaiming "The Lord
reigneth, let the earth re-
joice." He also beholds

historic ground, for it was
at the foot of Droop Moun-
tain where General Averill
with 5000 men pitched their
tents before the Battle of
Droop Mountain which be-
gan on November 6, 1863.

Hillsboro has always
been a religious and educa-
tional center. John Jordan
of pioneer fame gave a
building site to the Meth-
odist church which was
destroyed by fire and they
have since built four other
churches in the community
and now worship in a very
comfortable, commodious
building in the town of
Hillsboro. In extracts from
the journal of Rev. Francis
Asbury we find that in the
years 1788, 1790 and 1796
he had made three evange-
listic tours through this
section of the country com-
ing up through Greenbrier
County each time and being
entertained and preaching
at the home of McNeel in
the Little Levels, going
from there to the Drinnon
home where he was receiv-
ed "gladly" and entertain-
ed "kindly" in the Edray
neighborhood. His course
led from there to Cloverlick
down through Tygarts Val-
ley in Randolph County
enroute to Morgantown. At
the McNeel home lively
religious discussions were
indulged in by the whole
community.

Oak Grove Presbyterian
Church was organized in
the year of 1793. The early
records of the Church were
lost and no one remembers
when it was built. A
substantial brick structure
in which this sect wor-
shipped for many years was
later built southeast of
Hillsboro, where the ceme-
tery is still kept up. In 1830
the Church was reorganiz-
ed and Josiah Beard, Davis
Poague, and John Jordan
were elected elders. The
most distinguished minis-

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